

MEMORANDUM

September 14, 2001

To: Executive/Administrative Officers
Offices, Boards, and Divisions

Senior Management Staff
Justice Management Division

From: Lee Lofthus
Director
Finance Staff
Justice Management Division

Subject: Information for Travelers

The following information is to provide guidance to travelers during this period of interrupted air travel and heightened air travel security. Please ensure that this information is made available to travelers. You may be required to contact travelers who do not have access to the Internet from which to obtain information.

Travelers are encouraged to obtain the current status of air travel via the Internet at the following: www.virtuallythere.com. There is a link on this page, "Travel Bulletin Central," which connects the user to information on the re-opening of airports, airlines returning to service, security changes, travel alerts and restrictions, telephone numbers and links to travel providers, and answers to frequently asked questions.

***IMPORTANT* Travelers who have only e-tickets must have a copy of their itinerary with the reservation code, or an e-ticket receipt, plus a picture ID to proceed to the airline gates.** An e-ticket receipt can be printed from the Internet by going to www.virtuallythere.com. Under "Access My Trip," the traveler must enter the reservation code and traveler's last name to print a receipt.

Omega World Travel has instituted emergency service at its Jacksonville, NC site for those people stranded due to airport closures, etc. The telephone numbers are: 1-888-775-7576 or 1-800-721-5247 or (910) 455-9898; they will be open until 11:00 p.m. tonight, Friday, September 14, and also from 1:00 to 9:00 p.m. both Saturday and Sunday, September 15 and 16. The e-mail address is dojnc@owt.net. The regular 24 hour emergency service number, 1-800-685-6342 continues to operate as well.

Travelers who were unable to use e-tickets should wait until next week to contact Omega to cancel the unused tickets. Any traveler who had a coupon printed by an airline, but did not use it, must return that coupon at a later date to obtain a refund.

Travelers also should be advised that due to increased passenger and baggage security screenings at all airports, they should plan to arrive at the airport two to three hours prior to the scheduled departure. Luggage will not be checked at curbside, or at locations other than the ticket counter. Baggage may be checked at the airport within four hours of flight time.

Unattended vehicles near airport buildings will be towed, and there is increased vigilance for unattended bags. Passengers should be prepared for baggage searches. Also, passengers may not take knives or knifelike objects of any size onto aircraft.

If travel can be accomplished sooner by using ground transportation instead of waiting until air travel is available, it should be done, as long as the cost is not prohibitively expensive. (A comparison of added per diem and other expenses while waiting for air transportation should be considered.) If air travel is possible, but contract airfares are not available, travelers may use noncontract airfares. Prudence must be exercised, however. Premium class accommodations should not be used unless they are justifiable under normal circumstances. Rental cars may be used, but travelers must inquire about all costs and be wary of unreasonably high prices. If a one-way rental is required, the traveler must ask if there are "drop-off" fees and decide if they are reasonable. Before incurring additional expenses, travelers are advised to seek a verbal authorization from their supervisors or authorizing officials.

Additional per diem and other expenses resulting from the present emergency which were not anticipated when travel began do not require amended authorizations, but there should be explanations on or attached to vouchers. (However, obligation amounts may require adjustment prior to payment.) If employees take leave or personal travel, reimbursement will be limited to the expense that normally would have been incurred for direct, uninterrupted travel at Government rates, not inflated expenses that may or may not have resulted from the present situation.

A Travel Advisory from the General Services Administration with more information is attached.

If other issues arise that are not covered in this guidance, please contact Mark Rodeffer of my staff on (202) 616-5250, e-mail Mark.H.Rodeffer@usdoj.gov.

cc: Bureau Financial Officers

Attachment